

Tuberculosis (TB)

TB is a disease caused by germs called bacteria that most often affect the lungs. You can be infected with TB when you breathe in the germs. You are at a higher risk to get TB if you have a weak immune system. This system can be weakened by poor diet, illness, medicines or other causes.

Signs

There are two types of TB infection, latent or active. Latent infection is when you may have no signs of TB. The bacteria are in your body, but they are not active. Active TB is when people have signs of the bacteria, such as:

- Cough that lasts more than 3 weeks or won't go away
- Fever
- Weight loss or loss of appetite
- Feeling weak and tired
- Chest pain
- Night sweats

Testing

A skin test will be done to see if you are infected. A positive test means that you have been infected. If your test is positive, your doctor may also use a blood test, a chest x-ray and sputum tests to see if you have TB. Your family members and others living with you will also be skin tested.

A negative test often means that you are not infected. The skin test may not react if you have a weak immune system. Your doctor may check for TB if your skin test is negative, but you still have signs.

Tuberculosis (TBC)

La tuberculosis es una enfermedad producida por gérmenes llamados bacterias que mayormente afectan los pulmones. Se puede contagiar con tuberculosis al respirar los gérmenes. Si su sistema inmunitario es débil, se encuentra en un riesgo mayor de contraer tuberculosis. El sistema inmunitario se puede debilitar por una dieta deficiente, una enfermedad, medicamentos u otras causas.

Síntomas

Hay dos tipos de infección de TBC: latente o activa. La infección latente es cuando no presenta signos de TBC. Las bacterias están en su cuerpo, pero no están activas. La TBC activa es cuando las personas tienen síntomas de la bacteria, como:

- Tos que dura más de 3 semanas o no se va
- Fiebre
- Pérdida de peso o de apetito
- Sensación de debilidad y cansancio
- Dolor en el pecho
- Sudores nocturnos

Exámenes

Se realizará un examen cutáneo (prueba de tuberculina) para saber si está contagiado. Un examen positivo significa que ha sido contagiado. Si el resultado de su análisis es positivo, su médico también podría recomendar el uso de un análisis de sangre, una radiografía de tórax y una prueba de esputo para comprobar si tiene TBC. Sus familiares y otras personas que vivan con usted también se someterán al examen cutáneo.

Generalmente, un examen negativo significa que usted no está contagiado. La prueba de tuberculina puede no ser suficiente si usted tiene un sistema inmunitario débil. El médico puede comprobar si contrajo tuberculosis aun cuando su prueba de tuberculina sea negativa, si usted sigue teniendo signos.

Your Care

If you have a positive skin test or have TB, you will be started on medicines.

- Take your medicines as directed. You may need more than one type of medicine for TB. Some bacteria are resistant to some antibiotics. You need to take all of your medicines and not stop taking them, even if you feel better. You may have to take your medicines for 6 to 24 months. Stopping medicines early can cause the spread of TB to others.
- To protect others who do not have TB, cover your mouth when you cough, sneeze or laugh. Then, wash your hands. Always wash your hands before and after meals.
- To keep your body strong, eat 3 meals and drink 6 to 8 glasses of fluid each day.
- Go to all doctor appointments.

If you are sick enough that you need to be in the hospital:

- You may be on respiratory isolation. This prevents others from getting TB.
- You will be isolated until you have been on TB medicines for 2 to 3 weeks or until your sputum is not infected.
- Anyone who comes into your room will wear a mask.
- The door to your room will be closed.
- You will need to wear a mask when you are out of your room.

Call your doctor right away if you:

- Have a worse cough.
- Cough up blood.
- Have trouble breathing.
- Lose weight even when you are eating a good diet.
- Have fevers or night sweats.

Cuidados

Si tiene una prueba de tuberculina positiva o contrajo tuberculosis, comenzará a tomar medicamentos.

- Tome sus medicamentos como se lo indicaron. Tal vez necesite más de un tipo de medicamento para TBC. Algunas bacterias son resistentes a algunos antibióticos. Debe tomar todos sus medicamentos y no dejar de tomarlos, aun si se siente mejor. Puede que tenga que tomarlos durante 6 a 24 meses. Detener los medicamentos antes de tiempo puede hacer que le contagie TBC a otros.
- Para proteger a otros que no tengan TBC, cubra su boca al toser, estornudar o reírse. Lávese las manos después. Lávese siempre las manos antes y después de las comidas.
- Para mantener su cuerpo con fuerzas, haga 3 comidas y beba 6 a 8 vasos de líquido por día.
- Asista a todas las citas con el médico.

Si está tan enfermo como para requerir hospitalización:

- Puede que permanezca en aislamiento respiratorio. Esto evita que otras personas contraigan tuberculosis.
- Se le aislará hasta que haya tomado medicamentos contra la tuberculosis durante 2 a 3 semanas o hasta que su esputo no sea contagioso.
- Toda persona que ingrese a su habitación usará una máscara.
- La puerta de su habitación permanecerá cerrada.
- Tendrá que usar una máscara cuando salga de la habitación.

Llame a su médico de inmediato si:

- Su tos empeora
- Tose con sangre
- Tiene dificultad para respirar
- Pierde peso aunque tenga una buena dieta
- Tiene fiebre o sudoración nocturna

- Have brown urine or gray stools.
- Have yellow skin or yellow eyes.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.

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- Tiene orina de color café o deposiciones grises
- Tiene la piel o los ojos amarillos

Hable con su médico o enfermera si tiene alguna pregunta o duda.

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Tuberculosis (TB). Spanish.